Please disseminate this information to all middle / junior high school and high school counselors throughout Arkansas ASAP.

The Arkansas District of Optimist International is sponsoring a scholarship contest for **students who are deaf or hard of hearing.** The contest is called Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with the acronym CCDHH contest. The contest will be held at the Northwest Arkansas Community College / Shewmaker Center in Bentonville, AR on **April 12, 2014 at 10:00am.** The address is 1 College Drive, Bentonville, AR 72712. Winners will be announced at the District luncheon that day.

The topic for this year's contest is "How My Passions Impact the World."

The contest is open to all **deaf or hard of hearing students** in middle / junior high schools and high schools through grade 12. Winners will receive:

1st place scholarship - $2,500 (provided by Optimist International)

2nd place scholarship - $1,000 (provided by Optimist Hearing Foundation of Arkansas)

3rd place scholarship - $500 (provided by Optimist Hearing Foundation of Arkansas)

The **deadline to submit presentations to me is March 31, 2014.** In order to conduct the contest, a minimum of three (3) contestants is required. As a result, the Arkansas District is making an accelerated effort to distribute the contest information to as many schools as possible, as well as home schooled children. This will allow 3 very deserving students an opportunity to further their education.

It should also be noted that should a contestant fail to win first place, they would still be eligible to compete next year and would only be exempt from competition when first place is achieved. Students in the past have competed and won multiple 2nd or 3rd place scholarships or multiples including 1st place.

Students must have a hearing loss of **40 decibels or more** in order to be eligible to participate. Participants must submit an **audio-gram completed within 24 months of the date of the contest from a qualified audiologist.** Students may use sign language, oral presentation or a combination of both.

If you know anyone that would benefit from this information, please feel free to forward this message to them. We are seeking input and support from various constituents in the hearing related community. With the help of the Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas School for the Deaf and other groups such as Hands and Voices, AIM HI, Arkansas Children's Hospital, UALR and the Optimist Clubs throughout Arkansas, I feel confident that the contest this year will be a huge success.

As the contest chairman, I look forward to the opportunity to help our students of Arkansas in pursuit of their higher education goals.

The attached document will provide additional information related to the contest. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

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